

Vermont

Business Programs • Rural Energy for America Program

Inherit the Wind: The Generational Energy of Green Power Farms

For Kim and Peter Kowanko of Machester, Vermont, the vision of a brighter, cleaner future centers on their three children. Now entering adulthood, the young men are learning an important lesson at a formative time in their lives: tough challenges require creative solutions, and creative solutions require action. Their parents—DBA Green Power Farms—are investing in rural America by teaming up with the USDA and Star Wind Turbines to create a local source of energy for neighboring homes, farms and agricultural businesses.

“We want to show our kids—and to a wider extent, other people and businesses—that you can be energy-independent while helping others along the way,” says Kim, a former reading teacher. Peter, an entrepreneur and marketing consultant, has always harbored a passion for sustainable agriculture and alternate energy, so together they decided to make their commitment to clean energy very real by contracting with Star Wind for a trio of cutting-edge wind turbines.

With help from a \$131,250 USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant, Green Power Farms will generate an estimated 330,000 kWh/year; enough to power 60–90 homes in that period. “Today there are two electricity options for rural residents and businesses,” says Peter. “You either have to import it or beef up the area infrastructure. Electricity produced locally means avoiding that hassle and expense, making it more affordable and easier to access.”

REAP grants help farmers, producers and rural small businesses improve energy efficiency and integrate renewable-energy systems into their operations. In the case of the Kowankos and Green Power Farms, renewable energy defines both their business operation and an inspiring family legacy that will power generations to come.



Peter and Kim Kowanko, above, will help neighbors obtain clean, reusable energy with three high-efficiency wind turbines from Star Wind Turbines.

Obligation Amount: \$131,250 REAP Grant

Date of Obligation: 7/23/20

Congressional District: Representative Welch, District 1 VT; Senators Leahy and Sanders

Impact: This \$131,250 Rural Energy for America Program grant will help Green Power Farms generate enough energy to power 30 homes annually with three innovative wind turbines. The renewable-energy system is a living legacy for the owners' three kids.